

Simon Raywood

From: James Paulin [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 September 2026 12:22
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Botley West Solar Farm EN010147 – Response from an Interested Party

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Dear Secretary of State

Botley West Solar Farm: EN010147

I am disappointed that the Applicant's late submissions have been accepted causing further delay in the decision for Botley West and requesting yet another response from Interested Parties.

I am a supporter of the Stop Botley West campaign and fully endorse the comprehensive SBW submission of 16 July [C2-161]. I am concerned that despite these new proposals the Application is still irretrievably flawed. Too many questions remain unanswered and the Applicant seeks to defer too many important decisions until after any development consent is granted when they will be beyond public scrutiny and challenge.

I write as a resident of Eynsham, where the land in question is not an abstraction but the ground my family walks on. I also work professionally on machine learning applied to energy markets, and what troubles me most is that the Applicant's case for need rests on a static picture of a system that is changing very quickly indeed. Oxfordshire is, after all, the centre of the United Kingdom's fusion effort — UKAEA at Culham, which hosts the national fusion campus and the STEP prototype programme, Tokamak Energy at Milton Park, and the supply chain that has grown up around them. It is a strange kind of energy policy that asks this county to surrender some 1,400 hectares of productive farmland for forty years or more to the most land-hungry generating technology we have, while a few miles away the state invests in generation designed to need almost none. I do not suggest that fusion removes the need for solar capacity today; plainly it does not. I raise it because a consent of this scale and duration, in this place, demands a far higher standard of certainty about what will actually be built, how it will be operated and how the land will be returned than the Applicant has been prepared to offer. On the Applicant's own case the development is temporary and reversible. If that is genuinely so, it should be secured now by firm and enforceable obligations — a defined consent period, bonded decommissioning and full soil restoration — and not deferred to documents to be settled after consent, between developer and officers, beyond the reach of the public who must live with the result.

I respectfully request the Secretary of State to refuse outright the grant of a DCO for this Application.

Yours faithfully

James Paulin DPhil

[REDACTED]
